

## 10<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL FORUM ON HOARDING CONNECTS RESOURCES TO RESULTS

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On June 18-19, 2014, LACDMH Older Adult System of Care (OASOC) hosted the tenth annual forum on hoarding entitled, "Hoarding: How to Connect Resources to Results," at the California Endowment. Over 300 clinicians and clients attended the two-day conference which highlighted the evolution of hoarding as a mental disorder.

Theion Perkins, R.N., LACDMH GENESIS FCCS Program Head, welcomed the group and introduced Cynthia Banks, L.A. Community and Senior Services Director, who thanked all persons who work with hoarders.

Hoarding is recognized as a real problem in the community—two weeks ago a 73 year-old woman was found dead on her front porch in Santa Ana—she had been living in a truck in her driveway because her house (one of three) was piled five-feet high with trash with over 60 cats were living on the property.



Ms. Perkins commented that this year's forum aimed to move beyond theory and deal with treatment and intervention: "Most experts believe it's extremely important to involve the community and all resources available to work on these cases. Our goal this year was to identify the available resources and bring them together."

Morning keynote speaker, Randy Frost, Ph.D., psychology professor at Smith College, provided important distinctions about those who hoard, and gave case examples of persons treated in his program. Dr. Frost spoke on what hoarding is, who has it, why it happens and what interventions can be used to treat it. He concluded that hoarding is common (5% of population in U.S.), is debilitating, the reasons for it are becoming clearer (biological, psychological and physical vulnerabilities) and that effective interventions are being developed—including group and one-on-one therapies.



Sarah Gelberd, M.D., OASOC Medical Director said, "This year's forum provided a perfect balance of clinical and practical."

The forum welcomed back Jyothi Robertson, D.V.M., as the afternoon keynote speaker. Dr. Robertson works around animal hoarders and hoarding, stressing how fast animals can reproduce and create a dangerously unhealthy and unsanitary situation.

Day one closed with a choice of five breakout sessions covering organization, treatment, legal aspects and the child of a hoarder's perspective.



The second day of the conference featured speakers Theion Perkins; Kevin Tsang, L.C.S.W., LACDMH OASOC District Chief; Christina Nairn, L.C.S.W., GENESIS FCCS OASOC; and keynote speaker Cory Chalmers, CEO, Steri-Clean. Chalmers made an important point in noting that there is a unique human being who has a unique story within every hoarder.